

"Marks of a True Leader," Part 2 - 2 Corinthians 11:7-12 – February 12th, 2017

- Today's teaching will be part two of a series I've titled, "Marks of a True Leader."
- What we're seeing here in this chapter is a very blunt Apostle Paul rebuking the Corinthian church for tolerating false teachers.
- In so doing, Paul is sort of providing us a template of what a true leader looks like by identifying their marks and characteristics.

1. They are protective of the flock (Verses 1-3)

- After asking them to put up with him, Paul says he has a godly jealousy for them having promised them to one husband, Christ.
- He then expresses the fear that he has for them that just as the serpent deceived Eve, so too their minds might be led astray.
- This because, Paul saw it as his responsibility to protect them from being seduced so they wouldn't lose their spiritual virginity.

2. They are not about showmanship (Verses 4-6)

- Here, Paul compares himself to what he calls the "super-apostles" who it seems were very eloquent and persuasive speakers.
- The problem was these super-star preachers, as it were, preached a different Jesus, a different gospel, with a different spirit.
- If this weren't bad enough, the Corinthian Christians were accepting them due to their showmanship and style of entertainment.

3. They are not in it for the money (Verses 7-9)

7 Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? 8 I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. 9 And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so.

- v7 Paul rhetorically asks them if he sinned by lowering himself in order to elevate them by preaching the gospel free of charge.
- v8 He then goes on to say that he had actually robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve Corinth.
- v9 He says he didn't burden them when in need as the Macedonian brothers supplied it so he could keep from burdening them.

- This is yet another occasion in the Word of God where we need to know a little bit about the culture and customs of that day.
- If a speaker did not take money when he spoke, he was seen as an amateur, such that, he was unworthy of being paid for it.
- It seems that they regarded Paul in this way, given that he did not take any money from them, when he was there with them.

- I find it interesting that Paul would make mention of how he had "robbed" other churches so he wouldn't be a burden to Corinth.
- The word for robbed in the original language of the Greek New Testament carries with it the idea of stripping a dead soldier.
- Lest one get the wrong idea concerning what Paul did, we need look no further than to what he wrote in Philippians chapter 4.

Philippians 4:10–17 (NKJV) — 10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. 14 Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. 15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.

4. They truly love God's people (Verses 10-12)

10 As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine. 11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! 12 And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about.

- v10 Paul tells them that as surely as the truth of Christ is in him, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop him from his boasting.
- v11 He explains why by again, rhetorically asking them if it's because he does not love them. He then says God knows he does.
- v12 He says he will keep doing what he's doing in order to undercut those who consider themselves equal to them in boasting.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is Paul continues comparing himself with these super apostles.
- He does this by boasting that he loved them so much that he was unwilling to burden them financially as the others were doing.
- So much so, that he is willing to keep on doing what he has been doing, which is to cut the ground from under these hirelings.

John 10:11–13 (NKJV) — 11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

- To me, it is so sad that Paul has to go to this extent to defend his love and care for them as the pastor that planted their church.
- It begs the question of why? Why did they have such a disregard of the Apostle Paul, who loved them so much as a shepherd?
- One has suggested that it was due in large part to the fact that these Corinthian Christians were actually embarrassed of Paul.

As one commentator wrote, "Paul's boasting in his weakness and unimpressive image was an embarrassment to the Corinthian Christians. Why did he embarrass them this way? It was only because he loved them and would find a way to bring them back from their worldly thinking. ...Paul wanted to expose these most eminent apostles as frauds. If it took biting sarcasm or embarrassing the Corinthian Christians to expose them, Paul would use those tools."